

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method for organizing images, comprising:
2 analyzing images;
3 detecting attributes of the images;
4 comparing the detected attributes to identify images having a similar attribute;
5 and
6 associating images having the similar attribute to automatically generate an
7 attribute-based album.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein detecting attributes comprises
2 detecting content attributes.

1 3. The method of claim 2, wherein detecting content attributes comprises
2 detecting faces contained in the images.

1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein detecting content attributes comprises
2 detecting scenes contained in the images.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein detecting attributes comprises
2 detecting time attributes.

1 6. The method of claim 5, wherein detecting time attributes comprises
2 detecting dates and times of day on which images were captured.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein comparing the detected attributes
2 comprises comparing image attributes stored in a database associated with original
3 images.

1 8. The method of claim 1, further comprising storing images downloaded
2 on a particular date in a date-based folder within a protected originals folder.

1 9. The method of claim 8, further comprising creating a date-based album
2 separate from the date-based folder that identifies images stored in the date-based
3 folder.

1 10. The method of claim 9, wherein creating a date-based album comprises
2 creating a database that identifies the locations of the images stored in the date-based
3 folder.

1 11. The method of claim 10, further comprising storing in the date-based
2 album modified versions of images stored in the date-based folder.

1 12. A method for organizing images, comprising:
2 analyzing images by detecting content attributes contained in the images and
3 time attributes that indicate when the images were captured;
4 storing the images in a protected originals folder in which images are
5 protected from deletion and modification;
6 creating a date-based album comprising a database that identifies locations of
7 images stored in the protected originals folder that were downloaded on a particular
8 date and modified versions of those images, if any;
9 comparing the content attributes and the time attributes of images to identify
10 images having a common attribute; and
11 automatically generating an attribute-based album that comprises images
12 having the common attribute.

1 13. The method of claim 12, wherein detecting content attributes
2 comprises detecting faces and scenes contained in the images.

1 14. The method of claim 12, wherein detecting time attributes comprises
2 determining the dates and times of day on which the images were captured.

1 15. The method of claim 12, wherein automatically generating an attribute-
2 based album comprises creating a database that identifies locations of the images
3 comprising the common attribute whether stored in the protected originals folder or
4 the date-based album.

1 16. The method of claim 12, wherein analyzing images further comprises
2 querying a user for identification information regarding at least one of a detected face
3 or scene.

1 17. The method of claim 16, further comprising storing identification
2 information provided by the user in response to the querying.

1 18. The method of claim 12, further comprising storing results of the
2 image analysis in at least one database under the protected originals folder.

1 19. The method of claim 18, wherein comparing the content attributes and
2 the time attributes comprises comparing content attributes and time attributes
3 contained within the at least one protected originals folder database.

1 20. A system for organizing images, comprising:
2 means for detecting attributes of images;
3 means for storing the images in a protected originals folder and for storing
4 modified images in a date-based album;
5 means for creating a database for the date-based album that identifies locations
6 of images stored in the protected originals folder;
7 means for comparing the attributes of images to identify images having a
8 common attribute; and
9 means for automatically generating an attribute-based album that comprises
10 images having the common attribute.

1 21. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for detecting comprise
2 means for detecting content attributes including faces and scenes and means for
3 determining dates and times of day when the images were captured.

1 22. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for automatically
2 generating an attribute-based album comprise means for creating a database that
3 identifies locations of the images comprising the common attribute.

1 23. A method for locating images, comprising:
2 prompting a user to identify at least one image attribute;
3 receiving an identified image attribute;
4 analyzing at least one database of image attributes to identify images
5 comprising the identified attribute; and
6 presenting the identified images to the user.

1 24. An image management system stored on a computer-readable medium,
2 comprising:

3 an image analysis module that includes logic that is configured to detect
4 content attributes contained in the images and time attributes that indicate when the
5 images were captured;

6 an image storage module that includes logic that is configured to store images
7 in a protected originals folder in which images are protected from deletion and
8 modification and further configured to store modified versions of the images in date-
9 based albums; and

10 an album generation module that includes logic that is configured to
11 automatically-generate attribute-based albums that comprise images having at least
12 one common attribute.

1 -25. The system of claim 24, wherein the logic of the image analysis
2 module is configured to detect faces and scenes contained in the images and to
3 determine dates and times of day when the images were captured.

1 26. The system of claim 24, wherein the logic of the album generation
2 module is configured to compare the content attributes and the time attributes of
3 images to identify images having a common attribute.

1 27. The system of claim 24, further comprising an image search module
2 that includes logic configured to search databases of image attributes to locate
3 particular images desired by a user.